

GREENING VAUGHAN
The City of Vaughan's Comprehensive Waste Management Plan

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: How does Greening Vaughan Impact Service Levels?

A1: The Greening Vaughan initiative provides increased service levels, not decreased. Before the Greening Vaughan program was introduced, the City provided residents with 112 collections per year (a combination of blue box, garbage and leaf and yard waste). After the implementation of Phase 3 (September 2007), the City will provide residents with 164 collections per year (a combination of blue box, green bin, garbage and leaf and yard waste). The Greening Vaughan program increases service levels by providing an additional 52 collections per year!

It costs approximately \$2.00 / household each week for the weekly collection of blue box and green bin materials, the collection of garbage every other week and the seasonal collection of leaf and yard waste (34 collections per year). The disposal / processing of waste materials is the jurisdiction of the Region of York and therefore associated costs for these activities has not been incorporated in the collection costs noted above.

Q2: Why are the collection zones (collection days and collection weeks) changing?

A2: With the rapid growth and development in Vaughan over the past several years, the number of residential dwellings requiring collection has increased dramatically. This has resulted in a growing imbalance with the existing collection zones, which have been in place (basically unchanged) for more than a dozen years. The changes to the collection zones are intended to provide more balanced collections for each collection day.

Q3: Why is garbage being collected every other week?

A3: Similar to other cities that have introduced a weekly organics and blue box collection, the amount of "residual waste" that is destined for landfill is severely reduced. The "residual waste" primarily consists of film plastic, Styrofoam, blister packaging (such as what batteries come in) and miscellaneous items that currently cannot be recycled or composted. Residual waste represents only a small portion of the total household waste. This waste is inert and does not emit

an offensive odour nor attract animals. By fully participating in the City's blue box, green bin and leaf and yard collection programs, there should be no issues with the residual waste being collected every other week.

It also should be noted that in keeping with the City's overall waste diversion strategy, residents are encouraged to donate gently used items to organizations in need. In conjunction with the collection services offered by the City, the Region of York provides opportunities for residents to divert waste from landfill via their Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Waste Depots. Residents are reminded that Household Hazardous Waste is banned from the garbage stream. There is no cost to York Region residents to use these facilities.

Q4: Why are there limits on garbage?

A4: Limits are placed on the amount of garbage that can be collected to help ensure residents explore all opportunities reduce, reuse and recycle *prior to* disposing of material as waste destined for landfill.

From a waste reduction perspective, residents are encouraged partake in environmentally responsible consumer practices. Residents are reminded that gently used items ('reuse') are a welcome commodity at any participating charitable organization.

There are numerous diversion programs offered to residents by both the City of Vaughan and the Region of York. Residents are encouraged to make full use of the City's waste diversion offerings, such as the blue box, green bin and leaf and yard waste collection programs. In addition, the Region of York operates several Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Recycling Depots, one of which is conveniently located in Vaughan (8140 Rutherford Rd.)

Should residents embrace "reduce, reuse, recycle" practices, they should have no problem complying with the new limits for garbage.

It is important to note that there are no limits on the collection of recyclables (blue box), leaf & yard waste and organic (green bin) materials. Residents can purchase additional blue boxes for \$6 each, green bins for \$20 each and kitchen containers for \$6 each from the City's Public Works Department. The City also subsidizes the cost of backyard composters and offers them at a cost of \$17.00 to residents. These items are sold at the City's Joint Operations Centre located at 2800 Rutherford Road.

The City's Greening Vaughan initiative is a key component of the City's long-term strategy to reduce reliance on landfills and encourage the use of our waste diversion programs and services.

Q5: When referring to an “item limit” for garbage collection, what does an “item” mean?

A5: An “item” is garbage contained in a regulation sized plastic garbage bag, or garbage set out in a regulation sized rigid garbage container, or any acceptable bulky item. One item is equivalent to one lift in the garbage collection vehicle. As such, bulky items consisting of a table and four chairs are considered 5 items. A mattress and a box spring are considered 2 items.

Household garbage set out for collection SHALL NOT exceed 1.5 metres (5 feet) in length and 20.5 kgs (45 lbs) in weight and must be contained in regulation sized garbage bags/containers (except bulky items). Bulky items that do not fit into a regulation garbage bag/container must be free of hazards (i.e. nails) and bundled appropriately.

Remember, garbage containers shall not exceed 0.9m/35” in height and 0.5m/19” in diameter and must be designed for manual collection. The City reserves the right to refuse overweight and oversized items.

The garbage limit does not refer to leaf & yard waste, green bin or blue box recycling materials. There is no limit on the amount of residential blue box, green bin or leaf and yard materials a resident can place at curbside. However, the City does reserve the right to determine “reasonable amounts” of leaf & yard waste materials.

Q6: Will the change in garbage collection frequency increase illegal dumping?

A6: Illegal dumping is an issue with most municipalities that comprise of large urban/suburban centres. The City is committed to reduce the occurrences of illegal dumping via a stronger Littering and Dumping By-law. Residents are also encouraged to take an active role in keeping their community beautiful by reporting any incidence of illegal dumping that they may witness.

The City’s Littering and Dumping By-law No. 3-2004 makes littering and dumping of garbage illegal. The City’s by-law enforcement officers investigate illegal dumping complaints and make every effort to identify those persons responsible. For those who dump their garbage illegally, By-law No. 3-2004 carries a fine of up to \$5,000 for each offence.

If you see anyone illegally dumping waste at your curb or on public property, please contact the City of Vaughan so we can investigate.

Q7: Are multi-unit residential establishments, such as condominiums and apartments, included in this program?

A7: Multi-unit residential establishments are not included in the first 3 phases of Greening Vaughan. However, the City will focus on increased diversion opportunities/programs for these establishments after the launch of Phase 3 of Greening Vaughan.

Q8: Where can I purchase another green bin or kitchen container?

A8: Green bins can be purchased for \$20.00 each and kitchen containers for \$6.00 each from the Public Works Department situated in the Joint Operations Centre (J.O.C). The J.O.C is located at 2800 Rutherford Rd. in Maple, on the north side of Rutherford Rd., between Jane St. and Keele St. Please access driveway from Melville Ave. The Public Works Department is open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Green bins and kitchen containers will also be sold at mobile sales events held throughout the year.

Q9: What happens if the green bin cracks or breaks?

A9: Broken green bins and kitchen containers may be returned to the Public Works Department or a mobile sales event for a 'no charge' replacement.

Q10: What happens to green bin materials after they are collected?

A10: After your household organic (green bin) materials are collected by the City, the collection vehicles take the materials to a nearby transfer facility where they are loaded into large highway trailers. From there, the materials are taken to one of several licensed composting facilities under contract with York Region.

At these facilities, the materials are mechanically "debugged" inside an enclosed building. They are then mixed with ground yard waste or wood chips to reduce moisture levels. The blended materials are then composted under controlled conditions using a variety of different methods.

Once the composting process is finished, the materials are blended with topsoil and other amendments and are sold for use in numerous applications, including mining reclamation, agriculture and landscaping.

Q11: Can I place leaf and yard waste materials in the green bin?

A11: Please continue to dispose of your leaf and yard waste materials through the City's leaf and yard waste collection program. Refer to the leaf and yard waste section on the City's website (www.vaughan.ca) for more information on leaf and yard waste collection.

Q12: What should I do with my shredded paper?

A12: Small quantities of shredded paper can be disposed of INSIDE the green bin. Do not place shredded paper in with the blue box material or in large bags beside the blue box. The Region's Materials Recovery Facility is not designed to process shredded paper. Residents are encouraged to shred only those portions of documents containing personal information. The remainder of the document (not shredded) can be placed in the blue box for recycling.

Residents with large quantities of shredded paper can go to the York Region's website for a list of special events where large quantities of shredded paper can be dropped off for recycling (www.york.ca).